

*An Archaeological Survey of Front Nine:
Fort Hays Municipal Golf Course, Ellis County*

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During the first week of March, 2005, Burns & McDonnell conducted archaeological investigations to provide the City of Hays with data related to the location of intact cultural resource features and deposits, including those related to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) site of Fort Hays (14EL301). C. Tod Bevitt and Mark A. Latham surveyed the 75-acre golf course leased from the State of Kansas by the City of Hays, and an additional 15 acres around the Fort Hays State Historic Park (Latham 2005). The golf course wraps around the state park on the west, south, and east sides. The U.S. Highway 183 by-pass creates the northern boundary (Figure 1) of the golf course and the state-maintained Fort Hays Historic Park.

The primary objective of the archaeological investigation was to systematically survey the golf course and portions of the adjacent property at Fort Hays State Historic Park to identify cultural resources presence or evidence of the potential for additional cultural resources. It was known prior to the survey that elements or cultural features associated with the historic fort were within the golf course (Pankratz 1979:52, Pankratz, Reynolds, and Stein 1996:2-3, Reynolds and Stein 1994:19, CSC 1990:11-12, Oliva 1980:61-62). Our goal was to locate these features and other cultural deposits.

Site 14EL301 includes the area of the second Fort Hays, a military facility established to protect Euroamerican travelers on the Smoky Hill Road and to protect workers constructing the railroad. The site is south of Big Creek, on the southwestern edge of Hays, Kansas. The NRHP site has been defined as the remains of the major buildings concentrated in what is the state historic site. The results of this investigation clearly demonstrates that the features associated with the site, throughout its history, are found scattered across the state-owned and City of Hays managed golf course.

Eight previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken at Fort Hays (14EL301). All of these investigations have been conducted by staff of the Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS) in

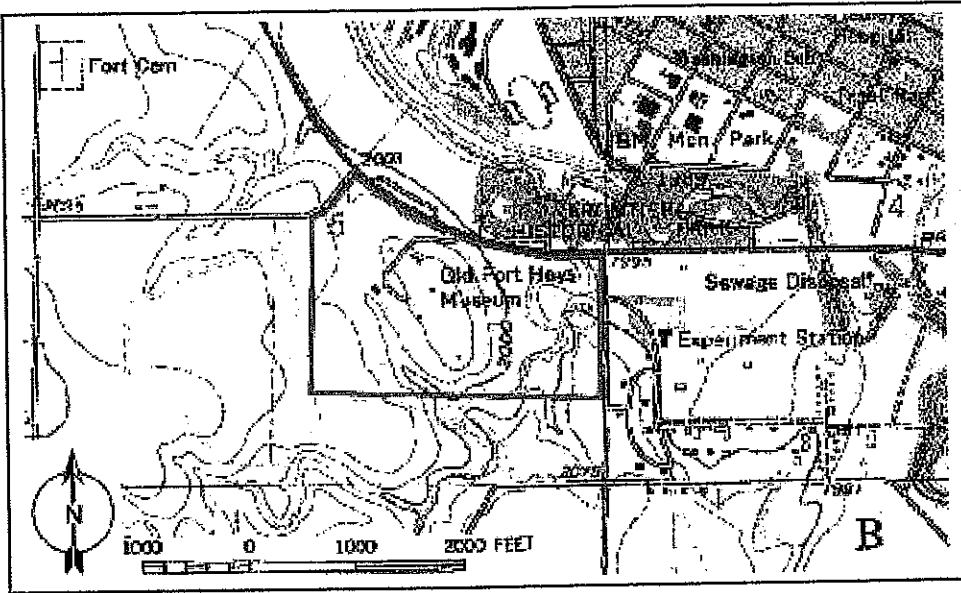


Figure 1. Area of Site 14EL301 and 2005
Survey Area, Ellis county, Kansas

the form of data recovery of known and prominent features within the fort proper.

The present investigation relied heavily on the historic maps and photographs, as well as previous archaeological and historic research, for identification of features. As a result of the current investigation, 100 features associated with the Euroamerican occupation of the site were documented, but one feature, Burns & McDonnell Feature (BMF) 58, was later determined to be associated with the golf course established around the site. Eight feature types were identified including (Latham 2005):

Rifle pits	=	24
Dugouts	=	16
Ovens	=	2
Walking/horse paths	=	10
Roads	=	12
Foundations	=	4
Pits/Depressions	=	26
Depressions	=	6

A more detailed discussion of our findings is being prepared by the authors and will be presented at a later date.

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